

volume is a paper upon them by Mr. G. Foord, describing the enhydros more in detail, and giving an account of the contained fluid, which he describes as a dilute solution in water of chlorides and sulphates of sodium, magnesium and calcium, together with silicic acid.

Some smaller specimens in my possession have a much more regular geometrical form than the three under examination and belonging to the Museum. At first sight they might be mistaken for crystals, so smooth and regular are their faces, but a very little examination shows that this is not the case, practically none of the faces are parallel, and their forms do not correspond to any crystallographic system. I am inclined to think that they have been deposited within cracks and cavities formed in the clay (in which they are found), these cavities are probably due to the movements of the clay, parts having slid upon one another in the process of settlement, and a breccia-like structure set up with intermediate gaps and cavities. Mr. Foord's explanation that the chalcedony and quartz crystals have been deposited upon the walls of the cavities until the entrances to the hollow spaces were filled up (a portion of the liquid being thereby imprisoned) appears to satisfy the requirements of the case.

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#### ADDITIONS TO THE AVIFAUNAS OF TASMANIA, AND NORFOLK AND LORD HOWE ISLANDS.

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DURING the last twelve months an unusually large number of rare or additional grallatorial and natatorial species have been obtained in these insular areas. It is my intention here to briefly note the latter. Why one season should be better than another for aquatic nomads or visitors to make their appearance almost simultaneously in places so widely separated as Lord Howe Island, Norfolk Island, and Santo in the New Hebrides is probably due to exceptionally fine weather and favourable climatic adventitious aids conducive to long and extended flight, and not, as frequently occurs with arboreal species driven to seek a place of refuge, through tempestuous weather.

To begin with Tasmania, Dr. L. Holden of Circular Head, informs me that at the latter end of April of this year, he shot in that locality a fine adult male Blue-billed Duck, *Erismatura australis*, Gould, which is now in the Collection of the newly formed Launceston Museum. This is the first time the bird has been recorded from Tasmania, its range being previously limited to New South Wales, Victoria, South and West Australia, over which it is rather sparingly dispersed.

Through the liberality of the same gentleman, the Trustees of the Australian Museum have just received the skin of a male New Zealand Shoveller, *Spatula variegata*, Gould, that was obtained amongst others of the same species by Mr. Thomas Carr, on the 20th of June, 1892, at One Tree Point, on the river Tamar near Launceston; numerous individuals of which were seen in the neighbourhood during the past winter. This species may be distinguished from the *Spatula rhynchotis* of Australia and Tasmania, to which it is closely allied, by being less robust and slightly smaller in its admeasurements; the feathers of the lower portion of the neck and mantle are white instead of fulvous brown, the short scapulars also have a larger amount of white on them, and the elongated scapulars are plume-like and more conspicuously marked with a broader lanceolate satiny-white stripe. The single male bird received from Mr. Walter Mantell in 1856 upon which Gould founded the species is evidently an exceptional one, if his figure of it in the "Supplement to the Birds of Australia," pl. lxxx. be correct; it shows a far larger amount of white upon the lower portion of the neck, mantle, scapulars, and breast than specimens since obtained in New Zealand or the one at present under consideration; the latter being similar in size and slightly brighter in colour to a mounted specimen in the Museum, obtained from the North Island of New Zealand, and approaching nearer to the figure given by Sir Walter Lawry Buller in his Birds of New Zealand, 2nd edition, Vol. ii. pl. xliii. p. 269, which he stated has been taken from a "fine male . . . in the best condition of plumage." With the specimen sent from Tasmania, a box containing a number of small fresh-water shells was forwarded, marked "taken from the gullet of *Spatula variegata*," and which I have handed to my colleague Mr. John Brazier for examination, who has determined them to belong to the following species:—*Tatea rufilabris*, A. Adam, found in Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland; *Bithynella simsoniana*, Brazier, and *Assimineia bicincta*, Petterd, both peculiar to Tasmania.

Dr. P. Herbert Metcalfe, the Resident Medical Officer at Norfolk Island has also forwarded to me for identification, the skins of three birds which he obtained on that island during April and May of this year, one a fully adult specimen of the White Heron *Herodias egretta*, Gmelin (*H. syrmatophorus*, Gould), which has an

extensive geographical distribution, having been recorded over the greater portion of the Old World, the Malay Archipelago, New Guinea, Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand; the little Black Cormorant *Graculus sulcirostris*, Brandt, inhabiting the Australian and Austro-Malayan Region, and the White-headed Stilt, *Himantopus leucocephalus*, Gould, occurring likewise in Australia, the Austro-Malayan Region, and New Zealand; the latter is not in fully adult plumage, and shows an admixture of smoky black feathers intermingled with the white on the crown of the head and occiput, a not uncommon variety in this species in its first season's plumage, a similar one having been obtained last year on behalf of the Trustees of the Australian Museum by Mr. T. R. Icely, the Visiting Magistrate at Lord Howe Island; also a specimen of the Black-billed Spoonbill, *Platalea melanorhyncha*, Reichenbach, found also in Northern, North-eastern, and North-western Australia, both of which have not previously been recorded from that island. In the early part of this month another specimen of *Himantopus leucocephalus* was presented to the Trustees by the Rev. Joseph Annand, M.A., of Tangoa, Santo in the New Hebrides, with a label attached—"Obtained at Tangoa, Santo, May 4th, 1892, not common here," showing that this interesting nomad has during a very short period been found in three hitherto unrecorded and widely separated localities.

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